

THE VIEW OF CONTEMPORARY SONGS AND MUSIC
AMONG MUSLIM STUDENTS : A CASE STUDY IN KUIM

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

I hereby declare that the work in this thesis/ dissertation / academic project is my own except for the quotations and summaries which have been duly acknowledged.

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“In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.”

First and foremost, I would like to express my praise and gratitude to the Almighty Allah for giving me inspiration and patience to finish this project paper successfully. Also, I would like to take this opportunity to give my special thanks to my supervisor of this project paper Miss Selvarani Kovil Pillai for her opinion, guidance, commitment, time, cooperation and so on until this project paper is completed gratefully. May God bless her.

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ABSTRAK

Dari kajian yang dijalankan, kesenian itu satu cabang kebudayaan. Oleh itu Penulis berusaha untuk mengetahui pandangan Islam terhadap nyanyian dan muzik. Bagi meneliti lebih mendalam, penulis mengskopkan kajian ini kepada pelajar-pelajar Islam di KUIM. Untuk memperolehi data, beberapa teknik kajian telah digunakan iaitu pemerhatian, soal selidik, meneliti dokumen dan rujukan di perpustakaan Universiti Malaya, UKM dan Perpustakaan Negara. Hasil kajian telah menunjukkan pelajar-pelajar KUIM adalah golongan remaja yang tidak terkecuali dari mendengar muzik. Walau bagaimana pun, majoriti daripada pelajar-pelajar di sini lebih menggemari nyanyian dan muzik berunsur dakwah. Dapatan dari hasil kajian juga telah menunjukkan bahawa Islam membenarkan hiburan yang berbentuk nyanyian dan muzik sekiranya faktor-faktor yang telah ditegah oleh Islam dapat dijauhi. Di antara faktor-faktor yang telah ditegah adalah nyanyian dan muzik yang mengkhayalkan umat Islam daripada menunaikan kewajipan mereka serta isi sesebuah lagu mestilah tidak menghina Allah dan rasul-Nya.

ABSTRACT

From the study conducted, art is a branch of culture. Thus, the writer works hard in order to know the Islamic perspective on songs and music. For a better understanding, the writer has given the scope of study only towards KUIM students. In order to get data and information, some research methods and techniques have been used, such as observation, surveys, looking into documents and references in libraries, for example, UM, UKM and the National Library. The findings of this research show that KUIM students are young adults who are not exempted from listening to music. However, the majority of the students here prefer songs and music on da'wah. The findings of this research also show that Islam allows entertainment in the form of songs and music if forbidden factors in Islam can be avoided. Some of the factors include songs or music that can make ummah to daydream or fantasize from doing their obligations and the content of the song should not dishonor Allah and His Prophet.

ملخص البحث

بالنسبة للبحث, أن الفنون من الثقافية, فلأجل ذلك قد حاولت الباحثة لإعلام موقف الاسلام من الغناء والموسيقي, والإعلام بعلم الرقيق, فركزت الباحثة على المبحوثين من الطلاب المسلمين بجامعة العلوم الاسلامية بماليزيا. وللحصول على المعلومات, قد استعملت الباحثة القاعدة القيام بالنقد, التفسيرية, وبالنظر إلى المعلومات المكتوبة وأيضا القاعدة المكتبة من مكتبة مالايا, جامعة الوطنية الماليزية وجامعة البلادى, والحاصل أنها دلت على أن هؤلاء الطلاب ما عندهم الاستثناء سماع الموسيقي ولكن جلهم يركزون على السماع الموسيقي لديه عناصر الدعوة. وبإضافة ذلك, أن الإسلام حث على السماع هذه الفنون ما دام ليس لها عناصر الخلاف بهذا الدين من حيث لديها عناصر الخيالة ومضمونها تضمن على عناصر الطعن لله ورسوله.

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GLOSSARY

<i>Halal</i>	lawful
<i>Zikrullah</i>	remembering Allah
<i>Solat</i>	prayers
<i>Khilaf</i>	contradictions
<i>Haram</i>	prohibited
<i>Taqlid</i> '	to follow the other without proof and knowledge about it
<i>Sama</i> '	listening
<i>Fuqaha</i>	the Islamic Jurists
<i>Mardhiah</i>	bless
<i>Aqli</i>	proof from Koran and Hadith
<i>Naqli</i>	the ulama' and fuqaha' views
<i>Rajih,</i>	true
<i>Sahih</i>	true
<i>Da'wah</i>	spread
<i>Ma'azif</i>	musical instruments
<i>Mizmaar</i>	musical instrument
<i>Madjlis</i>	both meeting-place and the session held there.
<i>Tarab</i>	emotion and delight
<i>ghina</i> '	song
<i>hadith</i>	traditions of the Prophet
<i>tadjwid</i>	embellishment of recitation
<i>Najd</i>	region in Arabia
<i>Tahqiq</i>	phonetic nature
<i>Tartil,</i>	the proper rules of recitation
<i>Adhan</i>	call to prayer
<i>Taqwa</i>	pious
<i>Eid</i>	festival
<i>Mahram</i>	father, son, younger brother

TRANSLITERATION SYSTEM FOR THE ARABIC WORDS
TRANSLITERATION SCHEDULE

1. Alphabet

<u>Arabic Letter</u>	<u>Latin Letter</u>	<u>Transliteration</u>
ء	‘	fa’r
ب	b	burd
ت	t	tall
ث	th	thawb
ج	j	jidār
ح	h	halīb
خ	kh	khādīm
د	d	dīk
ذ	dh	dhahab
ر	r	rafīq
ز	z	zamīl
س	s	salām
ش	sh	sha ^c b
ص	s	sakhr
ض	d	dayq
ط	t	ṭāzīj
ظ	z	zalīm
ع	c	^c aql
غ	gh	ghulām
ف	f	fīl
ق	q	qalb
ك	k	kalām
ل	l	lubb
م	m	māl

ن	n	najm
هـ	h	hawl
و	w	waraq
ي	y	yamm

2. Short Vocal

<u>Arabic Letter</u>	<u>Latin Letter</u>	<u>Transliteration</u>
_____	a	kataba
_____	i	°alima
_____	u	ghuliba

3. Long Vocal

<u>Arabic Letter</u>	<u>Latin Letter</u>	<u>Transliteration</u>
يَا	ā	°ālim, fatā
ي	ī	°alīm, dā°ī
و	u	°ulum, ad°u

4. Diphthong

<u>Arabic Letter</u>	<u>Latin Letter</u>	<u>Transliteration</u>
و	aw	nawm
ي	ay	layl
ي	iyy	Shafi°iyy (at the end)
و	uww	°uluww (at the end)

5. Exception

- a. The Arabic letter ء (*hamzah*) at the first words were transliterate into 'a' not '.

Example: أكبر Transliteration: akbar (not 'akbar)

- b. The Arabic letter ة (*ta' marbutah*) at the words without ال (*al*) that was continued to another words that was begin with ال (*al*) at the early, were transliterate into 't'.

Example: مكتبة الإمام Transliteration: maktabat al-imām

However, if there are words that have ال (*al*) or at the root word or to the last words, this *ta' marbutah* were transliterate into 'h'.

Example: المكتبة الأهلية Transliteration: al-maktabah al-ahliyyah

قلعة

qal'ah

دار وهبة

dār wahbah

ABBREVIATIONS

a.s	ʿalayh al-salam
comp.	compiler/compiled
ed.	editor/edition/edited
etc.	et cetera/ and so on
H	hijrah
i.e.	that is
n.a.	no author
n.d.	no date/no year
n.pl.	no place
n.pb.	no publisher
pg.	pages
r.a	radiya Allah ʿanhu/ʿanha/ ʿanhum
rev.	review
PBUH	peace be upon him
s.w.t.	subhanahu wa taʿala
trans.	translated

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION OF SONGS AND MUSIC

1.1 Introduction:

“How does Islam view songs and music in relation to Islamic law?” Frequently, we listen to this question posed by people. It is a question that has different answers from the Muslims.

Among them are those who listen to all kinds of songs and music. Their reason is that the songs are lawful or *halal*, according to *Syara'* and a form of amusement that is created by Allah for His servants.

There are Muslims who detest listening to any kind of songs and music because they believed that the songs are the devil's flute and consist of useless words that can block those from listening, to *zikrullah* (remembering Allah) and *solat* (prayers).

Music and songs are inevitable according to *Syara'* and it has influenced the human emotional aspect such as love and relationship. A majority of Muslims have waited for the correct answers to this question from the *ulama'*. It is related to the emotional and daily life of man because the radio and television are broadcasted in our home.

The type of songs that are not allowed by Islam is a controversy. Since the early Islamic establishment, there have been hot debates and long discussions by *ulama'*. They agree with several problems but there are still “*khilaf*” or contradictions with other problems.

Based on the *ulama'*s contradictions, the researcher feels that this problem needs a detailed explanation on the different views, so that the Muslims will

understand the lawful and the unlawful (*halal* and *haram*) of this topic. They will follow clarity, *rajih* and *sahih* views but not *taqlid*. “*Taqlid*” means to follow the others without proof and knowledge about it. It is not the way for one to clarify and understand about his religious matters.

Here, the researcher will explain about the position of music in Islam according to the ulama’s views and also referring to the evidence from the Quran and Hadith.

1.2 Definition Terms

According to the Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary, music means sounds that are arranged in a way that is pleasant or exciting to listen to. People sing music or play it on instruments. Contemporary means: First, belonging to the same time. Second, belong to the present time.

For the Westerners and other English speakers, the term “music” often refers to the combination of vocal and instrumental sounds or tones which form a wide variety of structurally, aesthetically and emotionally satisfying expressions of a culture underlying the belief system.¹ Thus, “music” according to this definition would include all forms of aural aesthetic expression regardless of the context or function or their performance. Such a term as mentioned, does not exist in Arabic, the language of Quran and Hadith literature. Consequently the discourse regarding music in Islam has seen the use of various terminologies.

The term which has widely been used to refer to music “*Sama’*” which means the listening, hearing, reciting or the vocal or instrumental music used exclusively in Sufi rituals to remember God. In its true sense, *Sama’* refers to the musical recitation of the Quran and does not include music outside of this context. However the focus of discussion on music in Islam found in the *Sama’*, literature or what is known as the *Sama’*, polemic, has led to the use of *Sama’* to refer not only to the listening to or recital of the Quran, but also to the listening of all music

¹ A S Hornby, 2000, *Oxford Advanced Dictionary Learner’s*, Sally Wehmeier, sixth edition, Oxford University Press, UK, 772

Actually, “music” has a big definition, however most of us know and use the music as a tool for entertainment today. Many people said that, music has a big impact and influence in life. The influences of music are has positive and negative perspectives. Whatever the students say about music, we cannot agree that music is totally one hundred percent negative influence.

Music also has positive influence in our lives. For example, in Malaysia, when we look at Islamic music, we have songs and good musical terms such as nasyid, with a mission concept in Islam. According to music contemporaries like Ballad, Rock, Jazz and others, positive influences will emerge too if we enjoy know how to enjoy them in a right way.

Indeed, we should open our minds to the idea that music gives good influences for the audience because music is able to calm and become an inspiration to all. In relation to the bad influences of music, it is true that music also has negative effects, if we become fanatics and do something that is not relevant in our lives or habits, because for the students, music is not only for enjoyment but some of them imitates the artist’s personalities, lifestyle, dressing, hair and the way of the artist articulates.

Here, music is an important part in life. It gives big influences especially for students that have less Islamic knowledge. However it is up to the individuals to decide on their own. If it is applied according to the positive way, of course, there is no problem in our lives but when we apply music negatively, we waste our youth.

The definitions of songs are:

1. A short piece of music with words that you sing
2. Songs in general, music for singing
3. The musical sounds that birds make²

² A S Hornby, 2000, *Oxford Advanced Dictionary Learner's*, Sally Wehmeier, sixth edition, Oxford University Press, UK, 1134.

1.3 Problem Statement:

Firstly, music is the issue that has been raised and gives big influence to students in KUIM. In this case, the researcher wants to know how far music is an influence and gives impact to their lives as students. Besides that, how do they accept contemporary music or listen to the music for positive influences.

Secondly, the researcher wants to know the perceptions of music from KUIM students, whether the influence is good or bad. Then, we can also look at the Islamic perspectives on contemporary music. Nowadays in Malaysia, only the Islamic Jurists (Fuqaha) or the ulama have a say on this matter. Some musicians have tried to take a closer look at the controversial issues of music in Islam, or have attempted to provide the musician's perspective or interpretation.

1.4 Research Objective

The research objectives are as follow:

1. To know the implication of music on Muslim students especially in KUIM.
2. To identify the students impression on music whether positive or negative.
3. To investigate how far the music is beneficial to KUIM students to develop their spirit, mood and others.
4. To know what are the views and opinions on music from the Islamic perspective.

1.5 Research Background

Art is a tradition or heritage for each nation that exist in this country, thus Muslims are also influenced by artistic types or forms that are introduced by the Western culture without any barriers and has penetrated into the culture lives of our students and others.

However, artistic courses especially on musical art are very popular among the society, generally to the students, and so the researcher feels the responsibility to clarify about its law from the Islamic perspective. This is because the Islamic base is to encourage us to do good deeds and forbid them from doing bad deeds. It is compulsory, so the explanations about law are necessary.

The Muslims in Malaysia do have awareness about Islam. There is a strong tendency to put Islamic values through the various kinds of media, especially through songs and music. This situation can be seen in the lyrics of songs phrases that can be interpreted into a kind of da'wah.

The question that arises on its influence and benefit to the society is based on the Islamic concept. How far the art of songs and this musical art can increase faith to Allah is a question that can be posed to each individual.

Referring to the statement above, the researcher hopes that this writing will give benefit to Muslims on the whole. The researcher hopes Allah will always bless us and give His guidance to all of us in our attempts to find his "*mardhiah*".

1.6 Research Scope

The research scopes focuses to Muslim students in KUIM, which is located at Pandan Indah. The writer works hard in order to know the Islamic perspective on songs and music.

1.7 Research Aim

1. To look at the influences of music on KUIM students.
2. To classify the types of music whether gives positive or negative influence to the students.

This research refers to a special research on matters that are related to musical art and Muslim student's views, understanding on the contemporary music from the Islamic perspective and the reality that happens today.

Observation is given by selecting views, *fuqaha'* opinions and proof from the Revelation and their opinions. Then compare between the Muslim students knowledge by *aqli* which is from the Quran and Hadith and by *naqli* which means the ulama' and *fuqaha'* views. Some of the important matters include the position of music in Islam.

In this writing, the researcher tries to come up with the terms mentioned by the Quran and Hadith in order to clarify that there are terms that are inevitable and forbids music. And then, it also has contradictions on the terms to forbid (*haram*) songs and music.

Ulama' views about music should be explained in order to strengthen the position of music in Islam. These include the sects of Syafi'e, Maliki, Hanbali and Hanafi. The researcher will also analyze the *rajih* and *sahih* views, which is true and accepted by other ulama' and the matters that become contradictory or *khilaf* among *fuqaha'*.

The focus of this writing is seen from the Muslim student's views and understanding on it. Their views are observed through the musical concept in Islam, the student's contemporary music selection, workplace opportunity and da'wah songs in the spread of Islamic religion.

1.8 Research Methodology

For this research the researcher will use several methods. This includes:

1. *Observation*

The researcher thinks this method is very important for the research because the title chosen for this research needs the researcher to make observation in order to select and come out with the influence of music to KUIM students.

2. *Conducting A Survey*

Another method is distributing questionnaires to 50 KUIM students' to gather information regarding this topic.

3. *Reading and collecting information*

To gather information, the researcher reads and collects data and information from several books on contemporary music at the National Library and KUIM library.

For this research, the researcher has arranged to practice her knowledge on research techniques such as:

- (a) Library research
- (b) A case study research
- (c) Laboratory research

However in this research, a case study research is used for gathering information needed by the researcher and visits to libraries such as:

- (a) Akademi Pengajian Islam
- (b) UKM Library
- (c) National library

- (d) Islamic Center library
- (e) USM library
- (f) Personal collection

The case study research also includes a study at KUIM. The researcher uses several research methods to get information and data.

The methods that are used such as:

- (a) Method of subject certainty
- (b) Method of data collection
- (c) Method of writing data-analysis

I. Methods of subject certainty

The researcher chooses KUIM as the research location. This selection using the observation method is exact and accurate. In view of KUIM as higher learning institution means it consists of Muslim students.

II. Method of data collection

To collect the data and facts needed, the researcher uses these methods:

- a) Historical method
- b) Questionnaire method
- c) Documentation method

Historical method

The researcher makes an effort to find data on the research background of the location, as the researcher is aware of the usefulness of the method in this study.

Questionnaires method

In this investigation, the researcher has distributed questionnaires to several Muslim students who are directly involved in the research. The questionnaires are made to get data for data collection in chapter three which analyzes the research data. So, this method is very important in chapter three.

Documentation method

In this study, the researcher uses this method in writing data about:

- 1) The position of Islamic music in chapter two.
- 2) Definition of music, history of music and opinions on Islamic songs by Islamic ulama' relating to music.

III. Method of data-analysis

Method of writing data-analysis is analyzing the data that needed that has been collected using the above methods.

In writing data-analysis, the researcher uses these methods:

- (a) Inductive method
- (b) Deductive method
- (c) Comparative method

Inductive method

The inductive method is the patterns of thinking that is to find proof from pages that have certain characters to reach the general terms. So, the ways of data analyzing that have certain characters and from the data, the researcher makes a conclusion that have general character.

Deductive method

The deductive pattern is the pattern of thinking to find proof with the basis from general terms to certain matters.

Comparative method

In analyzing and making this research, the researcher also uses comparative method besides the inductive and deductive methods. This method is a way to make a conclusion by making comparisons of several data found during the clarity period.

The researcher overall collects all data, facts and opinions of the authorities. Then, from the comparison, the researcher makes a general conclusion from the terms that are used in this research. These are the methods used by the researcher in her effort to finish this project paper.

1.9 Literature Review

The literature of Quran and Hadith on music:

1.9.1 Quran literature

Imam Al-Qurtubi mentions that there are three verses in the Quran, which have been used by the *Ulama* (body of Islamic scholars) as proof for the contempt for and prohibition of music and singing. They are:

Allah addresses the disbelievers of the Quraisy as follows, "Do you marvel at this statement, and laugh and do not weep, while you amuse yourselves (proudly) in vanities? Rather, prostrate before Allah and worship Him." (53:59-62) the important phrase is Allah's saying, "*wa antum saamidoon*" (while you amuse yourselves (proudly) in vanities). Due to the root *samada* having variant meanings in the Arabic language, the scholars differ in regards to the meaning of this phrase. As a result, different interpretations are given by commentators on the Quran, such as the *sahaba*, *tabi'in*, and later scholars of *tafseer*.

Al-Qurtubi refers to the various derived meanings mentioned by linguists. Among the meanings understood from the root whether the raising of one's head in pride or disdain is. When conjugated, the noun form *sumood* means leisure or idle play, while *saamid* (the doer of the action) means one who plays with musical instruments, and other objects of play. It is said to the singing girl, "*Asmideena!*" (Amuse us with your singing!).

At-Tabari mentions in detail the various narrations of the *sahaba* and *tabi'in* regarding this verse.³ According to Ibn Abbas, the word *samidoon* in this verse refers to the *mushrikeen's* (idol worshippers') habit of singing and playing music loudly whenever they heard the Quran being recited, in order to drown out the Reiter's voice so as to prevent the Word of Allah from being heard. Ibn Abbas also indicated a second, more

³ Osama Abdullah, 4/12/1999. "Is Music Allowed In Islam?" http://www.answering_christianity.com.

general meaning for the word *samidoon*; namely that they were making jokes, and amusing themselves playing and making light of the affair. A third meaning given by Ibn Abbas was that they held up their heads in disdainful pride. These same opinions have been reiterated by various *tabi'in*. Al-Hasan is reported to have said that *samidoon* is the *mushrikeen's* being inattentive and negligent. Mujahid states that it indicates their extreme anger or rage.

Allah (S.W.T) addresses Satan thus; *"And excites any of them whom you can with your voice. Assault them with your cavalry and infantry, be a partner with them in their wealth and children, and make them promises. But Satan promises nothing but deceit"* (17:64)

Numerous commentators from the *tabi'in*, such as Mujahid and Ad-Dahak, interpreted Satan's exciting mankind with his voice to mean through the use of music, song, and amusement.

The third verse, and the one most often referred to as evidence of the prohibition of music and singing is found in Sura Luqman. "And there are among men those who purchase idle talk in order to mislead others from Allah's path without knowledge, and those who throw ridicule upon it. For such there will be a humiliating punishment." (31:6) Ibn Jareer At-Tabari mentions in *Jami'ul Bayaan*, that the interpreters of the Quran differ as to the above of the term "*lahwal hadeeth*" (idle talk) as it occurs in the verse above. Their views regarding the meaning fit into three categories. ⁴

1.9.2 Hadith Literature

For this purpose, we turn to the second source of the *Syariah*, the *Sunnah* of the Prophet (SAW).

"The Prophet (SAW) said, "There will be (at some future time) people from my *ummah* (community of Muslims) who will seek to make lawful: fornication, the wearing of silk (by men), wine-drinking, and the use of musical instruments (*ma'azif*).

⁴ Osama Abdullah. 1999. "Is Music Allowed In Islam?" http://www.answering_christianity.com.

Some people will stay at the side of a mountain and when their shepherd comes in the evening to ask them for his needs, they will say, 'return to us tomorrow'. Then Allah will destroy them during the night by causing the mountain to fall on them, while he changes others into apes and swine. They will remain in such a state until the Day of Resurrection. (Related by Imam Al-Bukhari in *Fat-hul Baari*, graded *sahih*)

"The Messenger of Allah said, "A people of my ummah will drink wine, calling it by another name. Merriment will be made for them through the playing of musical instruments and the singing of lady singers. Allah will cleave the earth under them and turn others into apes and swine." (Related by Imam Ibn Majah in *Kitabul Fitan*, also related by Al-Bayhaqi and Ibn Asakir, graded *sahih*)

"Allah's Messenger said, "Verily Allah has prohibited for my ummah; wine, gambling, a drink distilled from corn, the drum and the lute, while He has supplemented me with another prayer, the witr." (Related by Ahmad ibn Hanbal in his *musnad*)

Upon finding his infant son, Ibrahim, in the throes of death, the Prophet (SAW) took his son in his arms, and held him until his spirit left him. Then he put him down and wept. His companion, Abdurrahman ibn Awf asked in astonishment, "You are weeping, O messenger of Allah, while you prohibit crying?" The following was the reply of the Prophet (SAW). "Verily I did not prohibit weeping (per se), but rather, I forbade two voices that are imbecilic (*ahmaq*) and sinfully shameless.

One, a voice singing to the accompaniment of musical amusement and Satan's instruments; the other, a voice [wailing] due to some calamity accompanied by striking of the face and the tearing of garments.⁵ But this [weeping of mine] stems from compassion, and whoever does not show compassion will not receive it." (Related by Al-Hakim, graded *hasan*)

Anas ibn Malik related from the Prophet (SAW) that, "two cursed sounds are that of the musical instrument (*mizmaar*) played on the occasion of joy and grace, and the

⁵ Osama Abdullah. 4/12/1999. "Is Music Allowed In Islam?" <http://www.answering-christianity.com>.

woeful wailing upon the occasion of adversity." (Related by Ash-Shafi'i, Al-Bazaar, and Al-Haythami, graded *sahih*) These narrations taken together prove the illegality of music and singing to musical accompaniment. The traditions quoted are not the only available authentic hadith regarding this subject which establishes prohibition, however, the sample above is sufficient proof, for, "Verily there in is a reminder for any who has a heart or who gives ear and earnestly witnesses [the truth]" (50:37).

In order to further strengthen the view regarding prohibition previously established, the researcher will relate the opinions of the Sahaba, Tabi'in, and the four Imams (Abu Hanifa, Malik, Shafi'i, and Ibn Hanbal, who founded the four schools of jurisprudence). Amongst the companions, there is no difference of opinion regarding music and singing.⁶

1.9.3 Music- Malaysia: Islamic pop group spreads religious messages

A new Islamic musical revolution is sweeping Malaysia and is threatening to spread to the rest of Asia. It's led by a clean-cut singing group of young men called "Raihan" which in Arabic means "sweet scent to heaven."

The five members of Raihan are singing their way into the hearts of fans through traditional Islamic religious hymns called "nasyids." Raihan gives these traditional tunes a modern touch, with the courtesy of percussion instruments. The result? Music has changed to be hip and uplifting.⁷ "When people hear nasyid, they will associate it with Arabic religious musical culture," Raihan is representative, Zaire Ahmad told the IPS. "We didn't like it to be traditional Arabic tunes. It must be contemporary."

"Sometimes we bring ballads, sentimental songs, but the music is very poetic," he added. "We put the love of God, and the advice of good deeds. That's what is called contemporary nasyid."

⁶ Osama Abdullah. 4/12/1999. "Is Music Allowed In Islam?" <http://www.answering-christianity.com>.

⁷ Kalinga Seneviratne. 24th April 1998. "Articles: music Malaysia: Islam Pop group spreads religious message. <http://www.google.com>. Inter Press Service English News Wire.

Whatever it is, people are listening and snapping up Raihan's works. The group's Debu album, "Puji-Pujian," was released only 1997, but it already has broken records in Malaysia, with 650,000 copies sold so far. The previous record holder sold 350,000 copies.

"Puji-Pujian" has outsold not only the songs of other Malaysian pop stars but also Western musical stars. The group's second album, released on January, has sold 150,000 copies and is still going strong. Raihan's music videos also get regular plays on MTV Asia and the group's recording company, Warner Music Malaysia, is betting it will soon become a byword in Asia as it is now in Malaysia.

Chandra Muzaffar, director of the Institute for Islamic Understanding and president of the International Movement for a Just World, says Raihan's success in this country is due in no small measure to a desire by many middle-class Malaysians to identify with what they see as another expression of Islam. "People were in the mood for something soothing and new," he observes. "Rural Malays, too, were relieved to find music that is slickly produced and local without (being) too tacky."

At the same time, he points to Raihan's marketing strategy, which is aimed at attracting non-Muslims as well. Amir notes that Raihan never puts down other "secular" groups as being "un-Islamic." He adds that the lyrics of Raihan's songs emphasize spirituality and compassion, rather than dogma and repression. Of course, it helps that "their voices and percussion arrangements aren't bad at all."⁸

Says Abu Bakar, Raihan's background vocalist: "Entertainment and music are the closest thing to today's youngsters. If we are going to influence them, it will have to be through music."

As a result, the group's message is more accepted by a sector of society that would have otherwise dismissed it as preachy or old-fashioned. "The difference between us and other pop singers is that we sing only about the good things," says Abu. "We don't

⁸ Kalinga Seneviratne. 24th April 1998. "Articles: music Malaysia: Islam Pop group spreads religious message. <http://www.google.com>. Inter Press Service English News Wire.

sing about love between boy and girl, but true love to God, His kingdom."

Still, Raihan has had run-ins with some in the religious community. Manager Farahin Abdul Fattah says that when Raihan signed the promotion deal with Warner, some members of the Muslim community said the group had sold its soul.⁹

1.9.4 Music is not forbidden in Islam

Music is one of the purest and most beautiful creations of God Almighty who set the tone and rhythm of every sound in the universe. Music or singing like all the creations of God, now constitute an important part of our daily lives can be lawfully used or maliciously abused.

Both music and singing are created pure, and beautiful like our fresh air and fresh water. Thus they can be corrupted or polluted by evildoers of every nationality, color or gender. The corruption of some music shows or songs does not make all the music or songs *haram* (prohibited) just like the pollution of some water or fresh air by some people will not deem all the water and air *haram* (prohibited).

The sincere Muslim who follows the Quran will not find in the Quran any prohibition what so ever of music or singing. God is very specific and His commands are very clear regarding any prohibition given in the Quran. God, the Most Merciful, never prohibited music or singing in the Quran. Any prohibition of music or singing that is discussed about among some Muslims has no basis in the Quran.

These prohibitions are innovations made up by some of the scholars and their followers who do not embarrass from refusing to follow the clear commands in the Quran and instead follow man made laws and books of Hadith and Sunna that contradict with the Quran. The contradictions, which are based on simple common sense, are an insult to the messages of the prophet Muhammed.

⁹ Kalinga Seneviratne, 24th April 1998. "Articles: music Malaysia: Islam Pop group spreads religious message." <http://www.google.com>. Inter Press Service English News Wire.

Any keen observer of the universe will realize that the whole universe was created with music in every corner of it. Our sounds of talking, crying, laughing, singing, yelling or screaming are nothing but music. Our heart beats, bowel sounds, breathing sounds, the sound of our blood flowing or even our brain waves are but music. The birds, the animals, the trees, the oceans, the wind and the clouds are all created with their own music. Music is in every corner of our universe. With music in every thing around us, it is naive to think that the One God who created all this music prohibits it. Those who claim that Music and singing are *haram* lie about God and prohibit what God never does.

The human being was created and given one of the most valuable gifts, a voice box, which is in reality a music box. This voice box or the larynx is one important instrument that allows us to communicate with each other and with other creatures around us. Our arrival and departure to and from this world are celebrated with that special music, the cry of the newborn or the cry for the departed one. The arrival of the newborn to this life is announced by his/her scream, which is the best music to the mother's ear.

For the earlier months of the human being's life, the only way of communication is through the music that his/her voice box makes until he/she learns the more sophisticated music that is called speech.¹⁰ It is not surprising to find out that listening to a foreign language is like listening to music with different tones. Those who prohibit music do not understand their Islam (Submission), or the basic gifts in life that God has given them.

A quick look at the life around those who condemn music and prohibit what God did not, will only expose their hypocrisy. Life around these people is full of music; music that they do not understand or appreciate the music that God put in their lives is to prove to us how wrong they are.

¹⁰ Sharif Khan. "Music is not forbidden in Islam". www.submission.com

Examples of such music around them are, the door bell, the car horn, the alarm clock, the telephone, fire alarm, the whistle of a tea pot, the computer, the radio, TV, the kids toys, the exotic birds, the lawn mower, etc. All these are but few of the music producing instruments in our life. Those who misses the true Islam, misses what life actually means, they prohibit what God does not in His complete book, the Quran.

In conclusion, God never prohibits music and singing. They are part of the most beautiful creations of God. As long as they do not call on the people or encourage them to commit sin, they are for the true believers to enjoy while remembering God with every beautiful note or rhythm. ¹¹

1.10 CONCLUSIONS

Some important conclusions that can be drawn from this academic project paper include:

1. Contemporary music that does not have any type of fanaticism is permissible provided that it exists in context and under the conditions sanctioned by Islam.
2. Islam should approve contemporary music in Malaysia.
3. All who are concerned with contemporary music in Malaysia need to be united and focused in their mission and have better Islamic connotations.

¹¹ Sharif Khan. 'Music is not forbidden in Islam'. www.submission.com

CHAPTER 2

THE ISLAMIC VIEWS OF CONTEMPORARY SONGS AND MUSIC

2.1 Proof that music and songs are inevitable

2.1.1 Proof from the Quran

Allah said:

إِنَّا فَتَحْنَا لَكَ فَتْحًا مُّبِينًا (1)

“Verily, we have given you (o Muhammad saw) a manifest victory”.¹²

According to most *Tafsir* ulama’, they mentions an addition to the verse to add for wings of angel or whatever is wanted by Allah. According to al-Zuhri and ibn Juraj: from the verse and Allah wants a nice voice.

This opinion is clarified by al-Haisam al-Farisi by his words:

“I saw prophet SAW in my dream, he said: O... Haisam! Beautify al-Quran by your nice, so Allah will give desserts to you”.

The other opinion by the al-Quraisyi is to interpret this sentence is done by its beautiful face, dulcet voice and good rhythm.¹³

¹² Surah al-Fath: 1

¹³ Prof. Dr. Yusuf Al-Qardhawi, 2002, *Seni dan Hiburan Dalam Islam*, Muhammad Baihaqi, Kuala Lumpur.

2.1.2 Proof from Hadith

1. Aisyah said that:

حديث عائشة رضى الله عنها قالت: دخل أبو بكر وعندي جایتان من جواری الا نصار تغنيان بما تقاوت به يوم بعات قالت وليستا بمغنتين فقال أبو بكر ایذمور الشيطان في بنت رسول الله (ص) وذلك في يوم عيد فقال رسول الله عليه وسلم يا ابا بكر ان لكل قوم عيدا هذا وعيدنا

“Abu Bakar visited me in my house. There are two female servants with me. The day is the Buath (the day the war between Aus and Khazraj started). I said, “They are not really singers” Abu Bakar said, “How come there are evil songs in the house of Rasulallah, during the festive season?” Rasulallah replied, “Hey, Abu Bakar. Everyone has his own celebration and this is a celebration”.

In his book, Imam Nawawi wrote that a song is not one of their customs. He brought along few views. Some say it was prohibited. Imam Syafie allowed it as it shows one’s bravery and strength.¹⁴

2.1.3 Proof from the History

Rasulullah had complimented the voice of Daud a.s by saying:

انه كان حسن الصوت في النياحة على نفسه وفي تلاوة الزبور حتى يجتمع الانس والجن والتي والطير سماع صوته

“He had a very good voice. He recites the Zabur fluently till all men, genies, animals, and birds come together to hear his singing”.

When Rasulullah and his companies arrived at Medina, the Ansar celebrated his arrived by singing a song like this,

¹⁴ An-Nawawi, 1996, *Syarh Sahih Muslim*, Dar al-Ma’rifat, Beirut, Lubnan, Jilid 4, Hal 41

من ثنيات الودع	طلع البدر علينا
ما دعا لله داع	وجب الشكر علينا
جئت بالأمر المطاع	أيها المبعوث فينا
موجبا يا خير داع	جئت شرقت المدينة

“You came as a shining moon; it is our responsibility to thanks as long as the messenger walks along the path of Allah. O, the messenger who sent for us, you came with commandments. You brought the honour to us. You came to a wide place, O, the best prophet.”

From the proof above we can conclude that singing and music are allowed in Islam. But, we should remember that the permission has its limits. Singing is allowed only at certain celebrations like at weddings, arrivals, and during hard work to reduce stress.

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There are a few conditions to be obeyed:

- 1) The theme of the song should be parallel to Islamic teachings.
- 2) The singer should perform the song in good manner.
- 3) Avoid from prohibited things like drinking beer, free lifestyle and etc.
- 4) Don't over do it. Singing is a medium to express feelings, not to overdo it.

2.2 Proof of Music's Prohibition

2.2.1 Proof from the al-Quran

Allah said:

وَمِنَ النَّاسِ مَن يَشْتَرِي لَهْوَ الْحَدِيثِ لِيُضِلَّ عَن سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ وَيَتَّخِذَهَا هُزُوًا
أُولَئِكَ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ مُّهِينٌ (6)

¹⁵ Prof. Dr. Yusuf Al-Qardhawi, 2002, *Seni dan Hiburan Dalam Islam*, Muhammad Baihaqi, Kuala Lumpur.

“And of mankind is he who purchases idle talks (i.e. music, singing, etc) to mislead (men) from the Path of Allah, the verses of the Koran by the way of mockery. For such there will be a humiliating torment (in the Hell-Fire)”¹⁶

From the verse above, there are views, which say ‘laghwa’ (the useless words) is singing. Ibn Hazm said there is no reason to use the verse as a proof of singing prohibition as,

- 1) There is no reason to go against Rasulallah.
- 2) The view is against the Sahabat’s and tabi’in.
- 3) Indeed, the verse itself is against the view. It says, “There are people who say useless words to make others disobey God without knowledge and a true path which wastes the path”.

Those who did such things are undoubtedly infidels.

Ibn Hazm then said, If a man uses the Quran to make people errant from the path of Islam and contempt them as a joke, he is out of Islam. Allah did not criticize those who used words to entertain them.¹⁷

For those who are busy doing other things like reciting the Quran, chattering, listening to music and so on till he fails to pray, he has gone over the boundaries and is disobedient. Those who complete their obligation before doing such things are doing good deeds.

Allah said:

وَتُرِيدُ أَنْ نَمُنَّ عَلَى الَّذِينَ اسْتُضْعِفُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَنَجْعَلَهُمْ أَئِمَّةً
وَنَجْعَلَهُمُ الْوَارِثِينَ (5)

*“And we wished to do a favor to those who were weak (and oppressed) in the land, and to make them rulers and to make them the inheritors”.*¹⁸

¹⁶ Surah Luqman: 6

¹⁷ Prof. Dr. Yusuf Al-Qardhawi, 2002, *Seni dan Hiburan Dalam Islam*, Muhammad Baihaqi, Kuala Lumpur.

¹⁸ Surah al-Qasas: 5

The opposition urged that singing is forbidden by a verse, which says, we must avoid 'laghwa' like singing and so on. But, obviously, al-laghwa means contemptuous words and jeers.

Some of the sahabat like Ibn Abbas, Ibn Mas'ud, and tabi'in like Mujahid, Hasan al-Basri, Ikrimah, Said ibn Zubair, Qatadah and Ibrahim al-Nakhaie stated laghwa is singing by women's.

The mufassirin like Imam Ibn Kathir said that the bad men had turned their face away from listening to the Quran. They prefer to listen to the music and its melody. Ibn Abbas said that meaning الغناء مدون أو (singing), a word from Himyar vocabulary. The tribe always says (لنا غنى لنا) they sing for us. Mujahid and Ikrimah agreed with Ibn Abbas.¹⁹

In fact, Imam Ghazali had agreed with the side that allows singing. He can provide detailed explanations to support his arguments. He can show us how a song can turn illegal in the eyes of Islam. That is justice, fair and a balance of *Syari'at* as it will be relevant for all places and times.

Truly, Fiqh Imam al-Ghazali in his book, *Ihya' Ulumuddin* is a reliable and pure fiqh, away from influences from any sect of Islam. He is not a Syafi'e. He is free from any influence and sees *Syari'at* with an open-mind.

The researcher thinks that not all of the singing is bad for us. It depends on the singers' intention. A good intention will turn a useless deed to a good one. On the contrary, a bad intention will turn a good deed to a bad one.

¹⁹ Prof. Dr. Yusuf Al-Qardhawi, 2002, *Seni dan Hiburan Dalam Islam*, Muhammad Baihaqi, Kuala Lumpur.

Imam al-Ghazali said, “If someone says the name of God under oath but he has no intention to do that, there is no wrong with that. So, how come we ban the singing and poems?”²⁰

The researcher would like to extract a passage from Ibn Hazm’s book, ‘al-Muhalla’ and argument is against those who ban singing and music. He said “Are their arguments true or false?

Allah said in His verse:

مِنْ أَجْلِ ذَلِكَ كَتَبْنَا عَلَىٰ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ أَنَّهُ مَنْ قَتَلَ نَفْسًا بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ أَوْ فَسَادٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ
فَكَأَنَّمَا قَتَلَ النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا وَمَنْ أَحْيَاهَا فَكَأَنَّمَا أَحْيَا النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا وَلَقَدْ جَاءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُنَا
بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ ثُمَّ إِنَّا كَثِيرًا مِنْهُمْ بَعَدَ ذَلِكَ فِي الْأَرْضِ لَمُسْرِفُونَ (32)

Means: “ Because of that we ordained for the children of Israel that if anyone killed a person not in retaliation of murder, or (and) to spread mischief in the land-it would be as if he killed all mankind, and if anyone saved a life, it would be as if he saved the life of all mankind. And indeed, there came to them Our Messengers with clear proofs, evidences, and signs, even then after that many of them continued to exceed the limits (e.g. by doing oppression unjustly and exceeding beyond the limits set by Allah by committing the major sins) in the land!”²¹

Ibn Hazm said “May Allah lead us to the truth. Rasulullah said that, “All deeds rewarded on its purpose. The purpose depends on the doer’s intentions.” This shows that if we take singing as an over limited entertainment, we are doing a bad thing. But, if we take it as an entertainment to ease ourselves or to bring ourselves closer to Allah, there is no wrong with it. ²²

²⁰ Prof. Dr. Yusuf Al-Qardhawi, 2002, *Seni dan Hiburan Dalam Islam*, Muhammad Baihaqi, Kuala Lumpur.

²¹ Surah al-Maidah: 32

²² *ibid*, 62.

2.2.2 Proof from Hadith

Rasulullah said that all games are a waste except three of them. They are spending time with your wife, training your horse, and archery. It is obvious that singing is not one of them. So, it is one of waste.

The side that allows it argues that the Hadith is weak. Even if it is true, the word 'bathil' means it is a waste instead of being illegal. Abu Darda' stated, "I'm used to do a few waste as it will strengthen me to do the good ones."

The Hadith mentioned before didn't mean to limit everything only to the three games, because sahabat used to watch Ethiopian dances and swords play in Masjid Nabawi. Undoubtedly, take a walk in the park, listening to the bird's voices and other games are a waste of time but they are still legal in the eyes of Islam.

There is a Hadith brought by Imam Bukhari from Abi Malik, a doubted figure, which means 'There will be a group of my people, which take free sex, silk, alcohol and music as legal things. But, this Hadith is Mu'allaq (not sure where it is come from).

Even though the Hadith is come from Imam Bukhari, it is mu'allaq; we don't know where it came from. Hence, Ibn Hazm rejected the Hadith. Moreover, ulama' agreed that the Hadith can be doubted.

Al-Hafiz Ibn Hajar tried to find out where it came from and he had found nine different sources. But every source has a doubted figure namely Hisyam Ibn Ammar. He had reported 400 Hadith without knowing where it comes from.²³

²³ Prof. Dr. Yusuf Al-Qardhawi, 2002, *Seni dan Hiburan Dalam Islam*, Muhammad Baihaqi, Kuala Lumpur.